

Boundary Changes for Fire Districts

Individuals interested in making a change in the boundaries of a fire district prepare a boundary change impact statement and present it to the governing body of the district. Information regarding valuation, taxes, and property ownership which is needed to prepare the boundary change impact statement is available in the office of the County Assessor.

The description of boundaries in the impact statement must be a legal description. Any property owner whose property is adjacent to the boundaries of the district may request in writing that the governing body of the district amend the district's boundaries to include his or her property. (Properties not contiguous to an existing fire district may not be annexed.)

If the governing body concludes that annexing the property is beneficial to the district, it may order the boundary change and no impact statement or petitions are required. A boundary change accomplished in this manner must be recorded and the order amending the boundary must include a description of the property.



***All of the steps listed
in this brochure are
described in Arizona
Revised Statutes
Section 48-261.***



Coconino County

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Fire Districts

**Coconino County
Community Development**

Fire District

Fire districts are created in the county's rural areas to protect the health, safety, and property of our residents. Creation of these special districts involves an impact assessment, public hearings, signature approval, and governing body organization.

Impact Statement

As the first step in creating a fire district, an impact statement is submitted to the Board of Supervisors.

(Community Development Department staff are available to assist in the preparation of an impact statement.) Additionally, a bond may be required to cover the County's expenses in the event the district is not formed.

The impact statement is an important stage in the formation of a fire district. The impact statement contains a description of the boundaries of the proposed district along with a detailed and accurate map; an estimate of the assessed valuation within the proposed district; an estimate of the change in property tax liability for a typical resident that will result if the district is established; a list of benefits that will result from the proposed district; a list of injuries that will result from the proposed district (for example, taxes where none currently exist); and the names, addresses, and occupations of the proposed members of the district's board of directors (only 3 members may serve on the district's organizing board).

Public Hearing

The Board of Supervisors sets a hearing on the impact statement and mails notice of the hearing to each property owner of record in the proposed district. Notice of the hearing is also published twice in the newspaper and posted in three conspicuous public places within the proposed district.

The Board of Supervisors holds a hearing on the impact statement and if it determines that the public health, comfort, convenience, necessity or welfare will be promoted, it approves the impact statement and authorizes circulation of petitions. However, if the Board denies authorization to circulate petitions, a similar request may not be refiled with the Board until after six months from the date of the Board's denial.

Petitions

Petitions may then be circulated by the proponents of the district. The petitions should have columns for date signed, printed name, signature, property address, and assessor's parcel number. A description of the boundaries of the district, an accurate map of the proposed district, and the list of proposed members of the organizing board must be attached to the petitions.

Petitions are turned into the Board of Supervisors, which sets a hearing to consider establishment of the district not less than 10 nor more than 30 days from official receipt of the petitions. Prior to the hearing, the County Assessor and County Recorder verify the petitions.

If the petitions contain the signatures of more than one half of the qualified registered voters in the proposed district, the signatures of more than one-half of the property owners in the proposed district, and if those who signed as property owners represent more than one-half of the total assessed value in the proposed district, the Board of Supervisors orders the creation of the district.

Establishment

Within 10 days of the Board's approval, the Order of Establishment is recorded with the County Recorder and the district is created 30 days following the Board's decision to establish it. The Board's decision is final, but may be appealed to the Superior Court.

Upon establishment of the district, the County will request taxing authority for the District from the Arizona Department of Revenue. There is a significant amount of lag time after district creation and before fire district property taxes begin to be collected.

The three-member organizing board appointed by the County Board of Supervisors upon district creation serves as the duly constituted board until the next regular election.



"If our house be on fire, without inquiring whether it was fired from within or without, we must try to extinguish it."